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ABSTRACT

The project reported here considers community college students who quit within a semester of study, as opposed to not finishing an entire college program. The latter subject has commanded the better part of the attentic devoted to the college dropout. Community college faculty and administrative staff admit to a fairly high dropout rate for individual courses, ranging between 30 and 60 percent. This project asks: When during the semester do dropouts occur? What reasons do students give for quitting? and Why do faculty members think they quit? Finally, is there any relationship between why students quit and when they quit? (Author/SGM)

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WHEN AND WHY STUDENTS QUIT COMMUNITY COLLEGE COURSES

JC 740 160

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

MAY, 1974

● ORANGE COAST COLLEGE
COSTA MESA

● GOLDEN WEST COLLEGE
HUNTINGTON BEACH

Attrition *n.* to wear, rub away 1. A wearing away by friction. 2. The process or state of being gradually worn down.

Drop out *v.i.* To stop being a member or participant.

Quit *v.i.* 1. To go away. 2. To stop or discontinue doing something; give up an undertaking.

Quitter *n.* (colloq.) A person who quits or gives up easily, without trying hard.

Source: Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language

AUTHOR'S COMMENT

Those who write about the behavior of community college students do not like to use the words "attrition" and "dropout." They have negative connotations. Preferring to assume a positive stance toward the problem, writers use positive words like "persistence." It's not always easy to use "persistence" when you mean dropping out. The staff of the Coordinating Council for Higher Education, for example, in the third report of their "Through the Open Door" series speaks of the "other side of persistence" meaning the extent that community college students quit. The project reported in these pages did the same thing in its data-gathering stages. We called this a study of "persistence patterns" even though we were really interested in when and why community college students quit their courses during the semester.

For the sake of accurate usage (attrition, meaning wearing away, is not synonymous with quitting) as well as in the belief that one best solves problems by facing them squarely, this writer uses such uncomfortable words as quit, quitter, and dropout with no apology.

I would like to thank those who helped with the execution of this project. Don Hayes and Stu Gorrie of the Coast Community College District Computing Center performed above the call of duty in preparing the computer programs and processing routines necessary to get the job done within severe time constraints. Teri Hoffman and Chris Yanick of the Office of Institutional Research did a remarkable job in handling the substantial correspondence involved. Finally, the faculty and administration of Golden West and Orange Coast Colleges deserve our special gratitude for their help and cooperation. Our thanks, too, to the students who answered our follow-up questionnaires.

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Director, Institutional Research

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The project reported here considers community college students who quit within a semester of study as opposed to not finishing an entire college program, which latter subject has commanded the better part of the attention devoted to the college dropout. Community college faculty and administrative staff admit to fairly high dropout rates for individual courses, ranging between 30 and 60 percent. This project asks when during the semester do dropouts occur, what reasons do students give for quitting, and why do faculty members think they quit? Finally, is there any relationship between why students quit and when they did?

This report will not review the extensive literature available on student dropout. Readers who want a research summary should read some of the studies listed in the bibliography. Suffice it here to observe that these studies usually discuss dropouts in terms of predicting them, often by means of such student characteristics as past academic achievement, personal and social situations, financial status, and motivation (Cohen and Brawer, p. 15).

This project is open to the sort of criticism that all parochial studies deserve in that it draws data only from faculty and students

from Orange Coast and Golden West Colleges. The results obtained may therefore not be useful for all community colleges because Golden West and Orange Coast are somewhat atypical because of their suburban, white, middle and upper middle-class student bodies. To the extent, however, that community college students share reasons for quitting courses that are unrelated to socioeconomic status, our findings will be useful to community colleges unlike Orange Coast or Golden West.

In 1973, a study completed at Southwestern College in Chula Vista, California, advanced the following conclusions as to relationships between student completion and certain variables characterizing the course environment (Galvin, pp. 13-14).

1. Student completion is not related to the time of day that a class is offered.
2. Student completion is not related to the content of the class.
3. Student completion rates are affected by the size of the class. Small classes have lower rates than medium or large size classes. This may come as disappointing news to those in community college who advocate small class sizes.
4. Student completion is not related to grading procedures.
5. Student completion is not related to the background of the teacher which background was assessed in terms of sex, age, teaching experience, and the degrees to which the course represents all or part of his teaching assignment.

The project reported in these pages made no effort to assess relationships between student or environmental characteristics and the

dropout phenomenon. These matters are left to the work done by other researchers which is reported in publications listed in the bibliography. Instead, it concentrated on reasons given by students and forwarded by faculty members as to why students quit courses. It tried to gather those reasons as soon after the event of quitting as possible.

PURPOSE AND PROCEDURES

This study seeks answers to three questions:

1. When do community college students drop out of courses?
2. Why do they drop out of them? This question is considered in terms of faculty opinion as well as in terms of reasons provided by the students themselves.
3. Are students' reasons for leaving related to when they leave?

Procedures

A random sample of all students enrolled at Golden West and Orange Coast Colleges during the fall, 1973-74 semester was selected in a manner that assured that it was representative of enrollment distribution between the two colleges, among the various divisions in each college, and between the day and evening programs. Students were associated with a division of instruction based upon the preponderance of course enrollments in their programs for the semester. If a student enrolled in three out of five business courses, say, then he was classified as a business student.

One course for each student was selected on a random basis from those included in his program that identified him with a specific division of instruction. This course served as the basis of tracking him through the semester's work to determine if he dropped that course.

Tracking was accomplished through the use of a faculty roster. Each faculty member at the two colleges received periodic rosters which showed the names of the students included in the study who were taking courses from him. A sample of the roster form appears in Appendix A. Instructors were asked to indicate on the form the status of each student's attendance and, if the student had stopped attending the course, to show why he thought the student quit. Having done this, the instructors returned the rosters to the Research Office.

The questionnaire rosters were thus circulated at two or three week intervals during the fall semester for a total of seven cycles. Once the student was identified by a faculty member as having quit a course, a follow-up questionnaire was sent to him immediately. A copy of the questionnaire appears in Appendix B.

The Sample

The sample was drawn from all day and evening students at both Orange Coast and Golden West Colleges. Student selection was based on analysis of course enrollment for the semester. Courses excluded from the study included all nine-week courses and those courses which did not require regular attendance such as open learning laboratories, television courses, independent study, and work experience. Because of these exclusions, a fairly large number of students were not included in the study. Of the 10,669 Golden West students who were active in the beginning of the semester, 7,549 qualified in terms of enrolling in those courses which were to be included. At Orange Coast College, 13,695 out of 20,293 possible students qualified

The total sample included 2,235 students of which 765 attended Golden West College and 1,470 Orange Coast. Tables I and II show, for each of the two colleges, the degree to which the sample is representative of the qualified college enrollment in terms of attendance times and instructional division. A sample of this size assures that the sample reflects the population characteristics with 98 percent confidence. For convenience, the sample was taken as a ten percent selection thus permitting the examination of every tenth student in the roster file for qualification for inclusion in the study.

The 98 percent confidence level does not hold for each instructional division taken individually. Therefore, conclusions drawn about the relative dropout rate between any two divisions must be made with care. For example, those twenty students serving as the sample for the Agricultural and Biological Science Division of Orange Coast College represent 205 students. Because of the relative sizes of the division population and the sample, we are only about 80 percent confident of the 55.0 percent dropout rate for that division.

For the entire population taken as a whole, then, we are 98 percent confident that the sample provides collegewide representation and that proportional representation is maintained throughout each of the divisions of instruction in each college.

WHEN DID STUDENTS QUIT THEIR COURSES?

Table III shows the percentages of students in the sample who quit their course during each of the seven cycles for both colleges and for each division in the college. The data show that most students, 52 percent

for Golden West and 61 percent for Orange Coast, quit their course prior to the week of October 8. Thereafter, the dropout rate was substantially lower than in either of the first two cycles with no pronounced increase after either the Thanksgiving vacation (November 26) or Christmas vacation (January 2).

No important pattern of dropping out appeared among the various divisions in terms of when students quit. At Golden West College, the Fine and Applied Arts Division seemed to show a dropout rate lower than the college as a whole during the October 8 cycle. Several other divisions had a somewhat higher dropout rate than the college as a whole during other cycles: Physical and Recreational Education in the October 26 cycle, Technology in the November 12 cycle, Business in the November 26 cycle, Fine and Applied Arts in the December 10 cycle, and Mathematics and Science in the January 2 cycle.

At Orange Coast College, five divisions had dropout rates for a particular cycle which were higher than for the college as a whole: Physical Science and Mathematics in the September 21 cycle, Literature and Languages in the October 8, Counseling and Guidance in the October 26, Consumer and Health Services in the November 12, and Technology in the November 26 cycle.

For the Coast District as a whole, nearly two-thirds of the 1,036 students who quit their courses did so prior to the fourth week of the semester: the October 8 cycle. The remainder dropped in decreasing proportions during each cycle for the rest of the semester.

WHY STUDENTS QUIT: INSTRUCTORS' OPINIONS

Appendix A shows the questionnaire roster that was completed by instructors. Instructors indicated the attendance status of every student shown on the roster for each of the seven cycles. If a student had stopped attending the course, the instructor was asked to indicate one of nine reasons why he felt the student quit. A tenth alternative was also provided to indicate that he did not know why.

Table IV shows the frequencies that these reasons were given for each division in the two colleges. The reason code shown across the top of the table is as follows:

1. Never attended
2. Illness
3. Academic difficulty
4. Lack of interest
5. Transferred to another course or section of this course
6. Advice of counselor or instructor
7. Quit college altogether
8. Fear of an undesirable grade
9. Other reason
10. Don't know

The data in Table IV indicate that a large portion of those students who do not complete a course never showed up to begin with. Interesting differences appear between Orange Coast and Golden West Colleges as to the percentages of students who never showed up: 24.6 percent for Golden West and 40.4 percent for Orange Coast. Most often, faculty members did not know why students did

not complete the course, provided that they showed up at all. This was true to a greater extent for Golden West College (69 percent) than for Orange Coast (61 percent).

The Technology Division at Golden West College had a higher no-show rate, 38.5 percent, than did the college as a whole, 24.6 percent. At Orange Coast, the Agriculture and Biological Sciences and the Health and Physical Education Division had higher no-show rates than did the college as a whole.

WHY STUDENTS QUIT: STUDENTS' REASONS

Once a teacher identified a student as having quit the course, he was sent a follow-up questionnaire. This is shown in Appendix B. Altogether, 1,036 questionnaires were mailed to students within ten days after instructors reported them as having quit their courses. Of these, 416 or 41 percent returned the questionnaire. Table V shows the student responses.

Have You Stopped Attending the Course Permanently?

Eighty-three percent of the respondents indicated that they had quit the course for good.

Why Did You Quit the Course?

Among those choices offered to students to indicate their reason for having quit the course, change in work schedule was checked more frequently than any other except the "Other" category. Table Va shows the tabulations of reasons offered by students in the "Other" category. Of these, personal responsibilities, conflicts and problems, attendance at a different college,

and schedule conflicts with work or other courses were the most frequently mentioned reasons.

Did You Have A Conference With the Instructor?

Nine percent of the students reported that they conferred with the instructor before quitting the course.

Would You Have Enrolled in Another Course if Available?

Slightly over half of the students indicated that they would have enrolled in another course if one were available when they quit.

Have You Been Receiving Veterans Benefits?

Ten percent of the respondents reported that they were receiving veterans benefits.

Marital Status

About equal proportions of the respondents reported being married and single. Less than ten percent were divorced or separated.

Table Vb compares marital status statistics for the follow-up respondents with those for all students enrolled in the District. Differences in response patterns between the two groups is significant at the .001 level of confidence, but nothing can be concluded from the significant chi-square score as it was brought about apparently by the higher proportion of respondents in the follow-up sample who did not answer the question.

Have You Been Working While Attending College?

Sixty-five percent of the respondents indicated that they were working while attending college. Forty-five percent reported working more than

30 hours a week and 12 percent reported working between 21 and 30 hours per week. These percentages compare roughly with the student body enrollment as a whole: 53 percent worked more than 40 hours a week, 11 percent worked between 21 and 30 hours a week.

Table Vc shows a comparison between the follow-up respondents and the total Coast enrollment with respect to number of hours per week spent working while attending college. Chi-square analysis shows the response distribution between the two groups to be significant at the .001 level of confidence. As with marital status (Table Vb), however, the significant chi-square value is probably the result of a greater incidence of "no answer" responses on the part of the follow-up group than is true for the total enrollment. There is some evidence that the dropout group worked fewer hours per week than was true for the total student population, enough perhaps, to add to the suspicion that working students are more highly motivated than their nonworking colleagues but not enough to draw firm conclusions to that effect.

Did You Take Advantage of Campus Help?

Only seven percent of the respondents indicated that they took advantage of various student aid such as tutorial services, loans, and grants while attending college.

Did You Try To Visit A College Counselor?

Thirty-two percent of the respondents indicated that they tried to visit a college counselor within the past year. Of these, one out of five said they were unsuccessful. Forty-six percent reported that they didn't try.

What Is Your Annual Family Income?

Comparing the distribution of responses to the annual income question yielded by the respondents and those provided by a random sample of all students enrolled in the District, shows response differences which are significant at the .001 level of confidence (Table Vd). There are somewhat more students proportionally in the $6,000 to $14,999 family income brackets for the dropout group than is true for the college population as a whole. The proportional differences are all small, however, and the high chi-square value surely results from the high "no answer" response from the dropout group. This writer is reluctant to conclude that a strong relationship obtains between income and propensity to quit college.

Attendance Status

Forty percent of the respondents indicated that they had quit college altogether.

Why Did You Stop Attending All Your Courses?

The largest single proportion of students who have quit college altogether reported that they were working full-time. The proporation is not sufficiently large to conclude, however, that going to work full-time is a primary reason to quit college.

Why Did You Stop Attending Some of Your College Courses?

Thirty-eight percent of those who quit some but not all of their college courses reported that they were working full-time and that because of this they had to drop their course. Another 16 percent reported going to work on a part-time basis. Twelve percent reported that they were enrolled in too many units.

Is Your Job Related To Your College Major?

Considering all students who quit their courses, 21 percent reported that the job at which they were now working was related to their college major.

ARE STUDENTS' REASONS FOR QUITTING RELATED TO WHEN THEY LEAVE?

Table VI shows the frequencies of student reasons for quitting their classes for each of the seven cycles in the study. The top portion of the table shows the complete picture. The reasons for quitting the course which are numbered across the top of the table are as follows:

1. Did not have necessary prior courses or prerequisites
2. Change in job work schedule made a change in college schedule necessary
3. Discontent with instructor
4. Discontent with the course
5. Course was not what you expected
6. Transportation problems
7. Parking problems
8. Times of class meetings were inconvenient
9. Class met too often each week
10. After missing several sessions it would have been too difficult to catch up
11. Fear of an undesirable grade for the course
12. Course was too easy
13. Course was too hard
14. Other reason

Despite a fairly large sample, spreading it over the 98 separate boxes of Table VI forbids the use of such statistical techniques as chi-square to arrive at an answer to the question. Most of the drop-outs occured in the first cycle whatever the reason might be; thereafter most reasons show a general decline toward the end of the semester. This has already been observed. Reason two, "Change in job work schedule made a change in college schedule necessary," seems to hold somewhat more steadily than do the rest and the same can be said for reason four, "Discontent with the course," and ten, "After missing several sessions, it would have been too difficult to catch up."

In an effort to be somewhat more analytical, the response frequencies as shown for the total list of 14 reasons were combined together into three groups. One group, indicating a general dislike for the course, includes reasons three, four, five, twelve and thirteen. Another, indicating conflict with schedules, includes two, eight and nine. A third, having to do with academic problems, includes reasons one, ten and eleven. Frequencies for all of these reasons were then added by group to show the responses shown in the lower part of Table VI.

Chi-square analysis of these broad areas showed that there is a relationship between the time the students quit the course and their reason for doing so. The relationship is significant at the eight per-cent level of confidence and seems to appear in the different timing of drop frequencies between the category Academic Problems and the other two categories. The Dislike the Course and Schedule Conflict categories each showed a typical high dropout rate early in the semester and a gradual reduction to the final cycle on January 2. The Academic Problems

area, on the other hand, shows a more steady pattern of dropping out during the entire semester. Thus, it would seem that academic problems can be a force causing students to drop the course any time whereas disliking the course or schedule conflicts seem to cause quitting earlier in the semester. Most readers, probably, would expect this to be the case. As happens with so much social science research, this analysis does more to verify intuitive feelings about things than it yields startingly new insights.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Most students who quit community college courses do so early in the semester and many of those never show up (Tables III and IV).
2. Contrary to expectations, this study found no upsurge in drop-out rates immediately following vacation periods (Table III).
3. Instructors, typically, do not know why students quit their courses (Table IV).
4. Over 40 percent of those who quit their courses never attended at all.
5. Students who reported having to quit their course because of changes in work and class schedules more frequently than any other reason (Table V and Va).
6. Students usually do not confer with instructors or counselors prior to quitting a course. Twenty percent of those who try to visit a counselor report that they were unsuccessful in doing so (Table V).

7. Working does not contribute to a student's propensity to quit college courses (Table V).
8. There may be some relationship between family income and propensity to quit college courses (Table Vd).
9. Forty percent of those students who had quit one college course had left college altogether (Table V).
10. When working, dropouts typically do not work in an area related to their college major (Table V).
11. Whereas most reasons for dropping courses took strongest effect in terms of causing students to quit early in the semester, those reasons related to academic problems caused fairly consistant dropout rates over the duration of the term (Table VI).
12. Evening college classes have a lower dropout rate than do day college classes (Tables I and II), possibly because evening college students are older and more goal-directed.
13. Golden West College has a lower dropout rate than does Orange Coast College (Tables I and II). This, apparently, is a result of Orange Coast College having a higher no-show rate than is true of its colleague institution.
14. Immediate follow-up of students who have dropped courses increases response rates. Typical response rates for mail questionnaires directed to former students is in the neighborhood of 25 to 30 percent. This study enjoyed a return rate that exceeded 40 percent probably because we contacted students almost immediately after they quit their course and because many of them were still enrolled in other courses on campus.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Courses offering enrollment opportunities at various times during the semester might reduce collegewide student dropout rates. About half of the dropouts indicated that they would have enrolled in other courses if those other courses had been available.
2. Many students who quit courses would possibly benefit from opportunities to switch to sections of the same course or to continue study by independent means. This is necesary so as to accomodate those for whom changes either in work or in college schedules necessitate dropping a course.
3. Ways should be sought which would increase the ease with which quitting students can confer with counselors or instructors. In the recognition that counselors and instructors at the two colleges are eager to work with students to solve scheduling and academic problems, this recommendation focuses more closely on procedures and channels of communications which will encourage students into a closer liaison with the college staff.

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Division	Attendance Time		Unit Load				Total
	Day	Evening	0.0-6.5	7.0-11.5	12.0-18.5	19.0+	
Agriculture and Biological Sciences							
Total Students, 9-18-73	-	44	25	12	7	-	44
Sample, 9-18-73	-	4	2	1	1	-	4
Sample, 2-11-74	-	4	2	1	1	-	4
Dropouts	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
Dropout Percent	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0
Business							
Total Students, 9-18-73	84	833	841	81	43	2	967
Sample, 9-18-73	8	89	84	9	4	-	97
Sample, 2-11-74	5	47	41	7	4	-	52
Dropouts	3	42	43	2	0	-	45
Dropout Percent	37.5	47.2	51.3	22.2	0.0	-	46.4
Consumer and Health Services							
Total Students, 9-18-73	-	49	45	4	-	-	49
Sample, 9-18-73	-	5	5	-	-	-	5
Sample, 2-11-74	-	4	4	-	-	-	4
Dropouts	-	1	1	-	-	-	1
Dropout Percent	-	20.0	20.0	-	-	-	20.0
Fine and Applied Arts							
Total Students, 9-18-73	151	374	417	42	64	2	525
Sample, 9-18-73	16	38	42	5	7	-	54
Sample, 2-11-74	12	23	27	3	5	-	35
Dropouts	4	15	15	2	2	-	19
Dropout Percent	25.0	39.5	35.7	40.0	28.6	-	35.2
Physical and Recreational Education							
Total Students, 9-18-73	543	97	165	142	324	9	640
Sample, 9-18-73	55	10	17	17	31	-	65
Sample, 2-11-74	29	4	10	5	18	-	33
Dropouts	26	6	7	12	13	-	32
Dropout Percent	47.3	60.0	41.2	70.6	41.9	-	49.2
Communications							
Total Students, 9-18-73	545	341	338	163	373	12	886
Sample, 9-18-73	54	34	35	17	35	1	88
Sample, 2-11-74	30	13	14	8	21	0	43
Dropouts	24	21	21	9	14	1	45
Dropout Percent	44.4	61.8	60.0	52.9	40.0	100.0	51.1

TABLE I

Golden West College Sample
(Page 1)

Division	Attendance Time		Unit Load				Total
	Day	Evening	0.0-6.5	7.0-11.5	12.0-18.5	19.0+	
Mathematics and Science							
Total Students, 9-18-73	863	353	352	237	564	63	1,216
Sample, 9-18-73	86	43	35	25	63	6	129
Sample, 2-11-74	45	21	17	12	32	5	66
Dropouts	41	22	18	13	31	1	63
Dropout Percent	47.7	51.2	51.4	52.0	49.2	16.7	48.8
Social Sciences							
Total Students, 9-18-73	1,324	1,020	841	620	865	18	2,344
Sample, 9-18-73	132	103	85	61	87	2	235
Sample, 2-11-74	81	78	62	36	59	2	159
Dropouts	51	25	23	25	28	0	76
Dropout Percent	38.6	24.3	27.1	41.0	32.2	0.0	32.3
Technology							
Total Students, 9-18-73	200	397	353	132	109	3	597
Sample, 9-18-73	20	39	35	13	11	-	59
Sample, 2-11-74	12	34	33	7	6	-	46
Dropouts	8	5	2	6	5	-	13
Dropout Percent	40.0	12.8	5.7	46.2	45.5	-	22.0
Health Sciences							
Total Students, 9-18-73	61	161	156	50	16	-	222
Sample, 9-18-73	6	16	16	4	2	-	22
Sample, 2-11-74	5	9	9	3	2	-	14
Dropouts	1	7	7	1	0	-	8
Dropout Percent	16.7	43.8	43.8	25.0	0.0	-	36.4
Special Education							
Total Students, 9-18-73	31	28	42	7	10	-	59
Sample, 9-18-73	4	3	5	1	1	-	7
Sample, 2-11-74	4	1	3	1	1	-	5
Dropouts	0	2	2	0	0	-	2
Dropout Percent	0.0	66.7	40.0	0.0	0.0	-	28.6
College Totals							
Total Students, 9-18-73	3,802	3,697	3,575	1,490	2,375	109	7,549
Sample, 9-18-73	381	384	361	153	242	9	765
Sample, 2-11-74	223	238	222	83	149	7	461
Dropouts	158	146	139	70	93	2	304
Dropout Percent	41.5	38.0	38.5	45.8	38.4	22.2	39.7

TABLE I

Golden West College Sample
(Page 2)

Division	Attendance Time		Unit Load				Total
	Day	Evening	0.0-6.5	7.0-11.5	12.0-18.5	19.0+	
Agriculture and Biological Sciences							
Total Students, 9-18-73	23	182	204	1	-	-	205
Sample, 9-18-73	2	18	20	-	-	-	20
Sample, 2-11-74	1	8	9	-	-	-	9
Dropouts	1	10	11	-	-	-	11
Dropout Percent	50.0	55.6	55.0	-	-	-	55.0
Business Education							
Total Students, 9-18-73	206	1,612	1,640	75	100	3	1,818
Sample, 9-18-73	20	162	165	6	11	-	182
Sample, 2-11-74	9	100	98	5	6	-	109
Dropouts	11	62	67	1	5	-	73
Dropout Percent	55.0	38.3	40.6	16.7	45.5	-	40.1
Consumer and Health Services							
Total Students, 9-18-73	301	752	831	70	147	5	1,053
Sample, 9-18-73	30	76	83	7	15	1	106
Sample, 2-11-74	18	50	51	4	13	1	68
Dropouts	12	26	32	3	2	0	38
Dropout Percent	40.0	34.2	38.6	42.9	13.3	0.0	35.8
Counseling and Guidance							
Total Students, 9-18-73	478	166	174	160	301	9	644
Sample, 9-18-73	44	16	13	24	23	-	60
Sample, 2-11-74	22	11	8	11	14	-	33
Dropouts	22	5	5	13	9	-	27
Dropout Percent	50.0	31.3	38.5	44.2	39.1	-	45.0
Fine Arts							
Total Students, 9-18-73	749	816	919	230	394	22	1,565
Sample, 9-18-73	74	82	94	29	33	-	156
Sample, 2-11-74	34	47	51	15	15	-	81
Dropouts	40	35	43	14	18	-	75
Dropout Percent	54.1	42.7	45.7	48.3	54.5	-	48.1
Health and Physical Education							
Total Students, 9-18-73	1,533	200	293	448	851	41	1,733
Sample, 9-18-73	154	20	46	62	65	1	174
Sample, 2-11-74	63	6	6	31	31	1	69
Dropouts	91	14	40	31	34	0	105
Dropout Percent	59.1	70.0	87.0	50.0	52.3	0.0	60.3

TABLE II

Orange Coast College Sample
(Page 1)

Division	Attendance Time		Unit Load				Total
	Day	Evening	0.0-6.5	7.0-11.5	12.0-18.5	19.0+	
Literature and Languages							
Total Students, 9-18-73	1,227	792	869	365	754	31	2,019
Sample, 9-18-73	122	80	89	45	66	2	202
Sample, 2-11-74	60	34	28	29	36	1	94
Dropouts	62	46	61	16	30	1	108
Dropout Percent	50.8	57.5	68.5	35.6	45.5	50.0	53.5
Physical Sciences and Mathematics							
Total Students, 9-18-73	887	428	467	275	546	27	1,315
Sample, 9-18-73	89	44	51	36	46	-	133
Sample, 2-11-74	35	25	22	19	19	-	60
Dropouts	54	19	29	17	27	-	73
Dropout Percent	60.7	43.2	56.9	47.2	58.7	-	54.9
Social Sciences							
Total Students, 9-18-73	1,606	767	796	590	952	35	2,373
Sample, 9-18-73	162	77	86	70	80	3	239
Sample, 2-11-74	66	39	34	28	43	0	105
Dropouts	96	38	52	42	37	3	134
Dropout Percent	59.3	49.4	60.5	60.0	46.3	100.0	56.1
Technology							
Total Students, 9-18-73	597	1,373	1,184	386	385	15	1,970
Sample, 9-18-73	61	137	122	40	36	-	198
Sample, 2-11-74	28	82	69	22	19	-	110
Dropouts	33	55	53	18	17	-	88
Dropout Percent	54.1	40.1	43.4	45.0	47.2	-	44.4
College Totals							
Total Students, 9-18-73	7,607	7,088	7,377	2,600	4,430	188	14,695
Sample, 9-18-73	758	712	769	319	375	7	1,470
Sample, 2-11-74	336	402	376	164	196	3	738
Dropouts	422	310	393	155	179	4	732
Dropout Percent	55.7	43.5	51.1	48.6	47.7	57.1	49.8

TABLE II

Orange Coast College Sample
(Page 2)

Division	Cycle 09/21 %	10/08 %	10/26 %	11/12 %	11/26 %	12/10 %	01/02 %	Total Quitting f	%
Golden West College									
Agriculture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Business	22	20	4	16	27	7	4	45	100
Consumer and Health Services	-	-	-	-	100	-	-	1	100
Fine and Applied Arts	32	5	5	5	21	16	16	19	100
Physical and Recreational Ed.	34	22	16	6	22	-	-	32	100
Communications	27	27	6	18	11	9	2	45	100
Mathematics and Science	36	21	3	9	2	8	21	63	100
Social Sciences	30	25	7	7	13	5	13	76	100
Technology	31	31	8	23	-	8	-	13	100
Health Sciences	38	25	-	25	-	-	12	8	100
Special Education	-	-	-	100	-	-	-	2	100
GWC Totals	30	22	6	12	13	7	10	304	100
Orange Coast College									
Agriculture and Biological Sci.	64	18	9	9	-	-	-	11	100
Business Education	52	4	14	11	8	7	4	73	100
Consumer and Health Services	45	10	13	21	-	8	3	38	100
Counseling and Guidance	37	15	30	4	-	11	4	27	100
Fine Arts	49	14	23	5	3	3	3	75	100
Health and Physical Education	58	19	6	6	7	5	-	105	100
Literature and Languages	40	24	20	2	5	5	5	108	100
Physical Science and Mathematics	71	10	6	4	1	7	1	73	100
Social Sciences	51	10	13	13	3	5	5	134	100
Technology	44	14	9	6	16	8	3	88	100
OCC Totals	51	14	13	8	5	6	3	732	100
Coast District Totals	45	16	11	9	8	6	5	1,036	100

TABLE III

When They Quit

Division	Reason Code 1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	6 %	7 %	8 %	9 %	10 %	Total Quitting f	Total Quitting %
Golden West College												
Agriculture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Business	25	4	-	2	-	-	-	-	9	60	45	100
Consumer and Health Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	1	100
Fine and Applied Arts	16	-	5	11	5	-	5	-	5	53	19	100
Physical and Recreational Ed.	28	6	-	6	-	3	-	-	3	53	32	100
Communications	13	5	7	2	5	2	-	-	15	51	45	100
Mathematics and Science	36	-	6	2	5	-	2	2	9	38	63	100
Social Sciences	21	1	1	3	1	-	1	3	7	62	76	100
Technology	39	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	15	39	13	100
Health Sciences	25	-	-	-	-	13	-	-	25	37	8	100
Special Education	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	2	100
GWC Totals	25	2	3	3	2	1	1	1	9	53	304	100
Orange Coast College												
Agriculture and Biological Sciences	64	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	9	18	11	100
Business Education	43	1	-	-	3	-	-	1	11	41	73	100
Consumer and Health Services	37	5	-	5	-	-	3	-	29	21	38	100
Counseling and Guidance	48	-	4	-	-	-	4	-	-	44	27	100
Fine Arts	36	1	1	6	11	1	4	-	11	29	75	100
Health and Physical Education	63	2	-	4	5	3	1	-	3	20	105	100
Literature and Languages	38	6	6	-	3	2	1	-	9	34	108	100
Physical Science and Mathematics	53	1	4	1	14	-	1	1	3	21	73	100
Social Sciences	47	-	2	2	2	-	2	1	4	42	134	100
Technology	48	1	1	1	1	-	3	1	5	39	88	100
OCC Totals	47	2	2	2	4	1	2	1	7	32	732	100
Coast District Totals	40	2	2	2	4	1	2	1	8	38	1,036	100

TABLE IV

Why They Quit: Instructors

	Golden West		Orange Coast		District	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Have you stopped attending the course permanently?						
Yes	91	86	253	82	344	83
No	12	11	55	18	67	16
No answer	3	3	2	1	5	1
1a. If "No" to question 1, why have you not been attending lately?						
Illness	7	17	39	21	39	21
Business	7	17	30	16	30	16
Travel	3	7	29	16	29	16
Other	24	58	90	48	9	48
2. Why did you quit the course?						
Lack of prerequisites	4	3	4	1	8	2
Change in work schedule	26	19	81	21	107	20
Discontent with instructor	6	4	23	6	29	6
Discontent with course	9	7	26	7	35	7
Course not as expected	7	5	33	8	40	8
Transportation problems	2	1	14	4	16	3
Parking problems	1	1	11	3	12	2
Inconvenient class meeting times	13	9	25	6	38	7
Class met too often each week	2	1	5	1	7	1
Got too far behind	15	11	35	9	50	9
Fear of undesirable grade	8	6	15	4	23	4
Course too easy	1	1	3	1	4	1
Course too hard	8	6	14	4	22	4
Other	37	27	103	26	140	26
3. Did you have a conference with the instructor?						
Yes	10	9	27	9	37	9
No	78	74	219	71	297	71
No answer	18	17	64	21	82	20
4. Would you have enrolled in another course if available?						
Yes	60	57	164	53	224	54
No	27	26	53	17	80	19
No answer	19	18	93	30	112	27

TABLE V

Responses to Follow-up Questionnaire (page 1)

	Golden West		Orange Coast		District	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
5. Have you been receiving veteran's benefits?						
Yes	10	9	32	10	42	10
No	79	74	212	68	291	70
No answer	17	16	66	21	83	20
6. Marital status						
Married	40	38	103	33	143	34
Single	40	38	123	40	163	39
Divorced or Separated	11	10	26	8	37	9
Widowed	1	1	-	-	1	-
No answer	14	13	58	19	72	17
7. Have you been working while attending college?						
No	18	17	43	14	61	15
1 - 10 hours per week	3	3	9	3	12	3
11 - 20 hours per week	3	3	17	6	20	5
21 - 30 hours per week	8	8	43	14	51	12
31 - 40 hours per week	43	41	54	17	97	23
More than 40 hours per week	17	16	75	24	92	22
No answer	14	13	69	22	83	20
8. Did you take advantage of campus help?						
Yes	9	8	22	7	3	7
No	76	72	213	69	289	69
No answer	21	20	75	31	96	23
9. Tried to visit a college counselor?						
Yes, successfully	23	22	87	28	110	26
Yes, unsuccessfully	5	5	20	6	25	6
No	60	57	131	42	191	46
No answer	18	17	72	23	90	22
10. Annual family income						
Less than $3,000	5	5	24	8	29	7
$3,000 to $5,999	14	13	31	10	45	11
$6,000 to $9,999	10	9	32	10	46	10
$10,000 to $14,999	26	24	54	17	80	19
$15,000 or more	24	23	73	24	97	23
No answer	27	26	96	31	123	30

TABLE V

Responses to Follow-up Questionnaire (page 2)

	Golden West		Orange Coast		District	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
11. Attendance status						
Quit college altogether	40	38	128	41	168	40
Still attending some classes	25	24	55	18	80	19
Changed course	16	15	38	12	54	13
Changed section	1	1	3	1	4	1
No answer	24	23	86	28	110	26
12. Why did you stop attending all your courses?						
Moved	9	20	22	16	31	17
College transfer	4	9	19	14	23	13
Working full-time	8	17	29	21	37	20
Health	4	9	18	13	22	12
Other	21	46	48	35	69	38
Total answering	46	100	136	100	182	100
13. Why did you stop attending some of your college courses?						
Working full-time	8	29	23	43	31	38
Working part-time	3	11	10	19	13	16
Too many units	5	18	5	9	10	12
Other	12	43	15	28	27	33
Total answering	28	100	53	100	81	100
14. Is your job related to your college major?						
Quit all courses						
Related	1	6	6	9	7	9
Unrelated	7	44	25	38	32	39
Quit some courses						
Related	3	19	7	11	10	12
Unrelated	5	31	27	42	32	39
Total answering	16	100	65	100	81	100

TABLE V

Responses To Follow-Up Questionnaire (Page 3)

	Golden West		Orange Coast		District	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Too expensive	1	3	1	1	2	2
Course too hard	2	6	1	1	3	2
Went to work full-time	1	3	4	4	5	4
Schedule conflict with work, other courses	4	11	10	10	14	11
Load too heavy	4	11	4	4	8	6
Medical problems	1	3	7	7	8	6
Got behind	2	6	1	1	3	2
Books delayed	1	3	-	-	1	1
Changed to another course	2	6	6	6	8	6
Personal responsibilities; conflicts; problems	5	15	12	12	17	13
Quit college altogether	1	3	5	5	6	5
Left area	2	6	11	11	13	10
Course not needed	2	6	10	10	12	9
Child care problem	2	6	1	1	3	2
Didn't like course, wasn't as expected	2	6	6	6	8	6
Attending different college	2	6	13	13	15	11
Never intended to attend	-	-	4	4	4	3
Enrolled in error	-	-	2	2	2	2
Total answering	34	100	98	100	132	100

TABLE Va

Other Reasons They Quit the Course

	Coast Total		Sample	
	f	%	f	%
Marital Status				
Married	18,672	47	143	34
Single	17,461	44	163	39
Divorced or Separated	2,888	7	37	9
Widowed	269	7	1	0
No answer	269	7	72	17

Chi-square = 85.4; $P \leq .001$

TABLE Vb

Comparison of Marital Status: Dropouts vs Total Enrollment

	Coast Total		Sample	
	f	%	f	%
Hours Working Per Week				
None	6,049	15	61	15
1 - 10 hours	2,318	6	12	3
11 - 20 hours	4,470	11	20	5
21 - 30 hours	4,176	10	51	12
31 - 40 hours	13,885	35	97	23
More than 40	7,845	20	92	22
No answer	827	2	83	20

Chi-square = 617.3; $P \leq .001$

TABLE Vc

Comparison of Hours Per Week Working:
Dropouts vs Total Enrollment

	Coast Total		Sample	
	f	%	f	%
Annual Family Income				
Less than $3,000	3,656	9	29	7
$3,000 to $5,999	4,838	12	45	11
$6,000 to $9,999	6,661	17	46	10
$10,000 to $14,999	9,922	25	80	19
$15,000 or more	8,267	21	97	23
No answer	6,215	16	123	30

Chi-square = 67.14; $P \leq .001$

TABLE Vd

Comparison of Annual Family Income:
Dropouts vs Total Enrollment

Cycle	1 f	1 %	2 f	2 %	3 f	3 %	4 f	4 %	5 f	5 %	6 f	6 %	7 f	7 %
09/21	5	64	49	46	11	38	11	31	12	30	9	56	5	42
10/08	1	12	21	19	4	14	8	23	7	17	3	19	3	25
10/26	1	12	13	12	5	17	4	11	9	23	1	6	1	8
11/12	-	-	5	5	2	7	5	14	3	8	1	6	1	8
11/26	1	12	10	9	1	3	3	9	5	12	-	-	1	8
12/10	-	-	5	5	3	10	2	6	2	5	2	13	1	8
01/02	-	-	4	4	3	10	2	6	2	5	-	-	-	-
Total	8	100	107	100	29	100	35	100	40	100	16	100	12	100

Cycle	8 f	8 %	9 f	9 %	10 f	10 %	11 f	11 %	12 f	12 %	13 f	13 %	14 f	14 %
09/21	20	53	5	71	13	25	6	26	3	75	6	27	74	53
10/08	7	18	1	14	8	16	4	17	-	-	5	23	27	19
10/26	4	11	-	-	6	12	3	13	1	25	2	9	12	9
11/12	2	5	-	-	3	6	2	9	-	-	2	9	6	4
11/26	2	5	-	-	9	17	2	9	-	-	4	18	14	10
12/10	1	3	1	14	8	16	5	22	-	-	1	5	6	4
01/02	2	5	-	-	4	8	1	4	-	-	2	9	1	1
Total	38	100	7	100	51	100	23	100	4	100	22	100	140	100

Cycle	3,4,5,12,13 Disliked Course f	3,4,5,12,13 Disliked Course %	2,8,9 Schedule Conflicts f	2,8,9 Schedule Conflicts %	1,10,11 Academic Problems f	1,10,11 Academic Problems %
09/21	43	33	74	49	24	29
10/08	24	18	29	19	13	15
10/26	21	16	17	11	10	12
11/12	12	9	7	5	5	6
11/26	13	10	12	8	12	14
12/10	8	6	7	5	13	15
01/02	9	7	6	4	5	6
Total	130	100	152	100	82	100

Chi-square = 19.3; $P \leq .08$

TABLE VI

Association Between Time of Drop and Reason for Drop

APPENDIX A

P13-S10 PERSISTENCE PATTERN STUDY 09/18/73
QUESTIONNAIRE ROSTER
FALL SEMESTER 1973-74 ORANGE COAST COLLEGE PAGE 1

ECKLEB W___

TRUCTOR: LISTED BELOW ARE A FEW STUDENTS WHO ARE ENROLLED IN ONE OR MORE OF YOUR CLASSES. THEY ARE PART OF THE SAMPLE WE ARE FOLLOWING AS PART OF THE PERSISTENCE PATTERN STUDY. WE WILL SEND YOU A COPY OF THIS ROSTER EVERY TWO WEEKS. PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING EACH TIME:

1. IF A STUDENT WAS ACTIVELY ENROLLED IN THE CLASS AS OF 09-18-73, WRITE A NUMERAL 99 IN THE COLUMN HEADED "CURRENT DATE."

2. IF A STUDENT HAS STOPPED ATTENDING THE CLASS AS OF 09-18-73, PLEASE WRITE A NUMERAL CODE IN THE COLUMN HEADED "CURRENT DATE." THE NUMERAL YOU WRITE WILL INDICATE WHY YOU THINK THE STUDENT STOPPED ATTENDING. HERE ARE THE CODE NUMBERS:

ODE	REASON	CODE	REASON
1	NEVER ATTENDED	6	ADVICE OF COUNSELOR OR INSTRUCTOR
2	ILLNESS	7	QUIT COLLEGE ALTOGETHER
3	ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY	8	FEAR OF AN UNDESIRABLE GRADE
4	LACK OF INTEREST	9	OTHER REASON (PLEASE COMMENT)
5	TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER COURSE OR SECTION OF THIS COURSE	10	DON'T KNOW

3. AFTER INDICATING THE STUDENTS' CURRENT ATTENDANCE STATUS BY WRITING ONE OF THE ABOVE CODES IN THE "CURRENT DATE" COLUMN FOR EACH ONE, RETURN THIS ROSTER TO THE OFFICE OF:
THE DEAN OF INSTRUCTION, ORANGE COAST COLLEGE.

OTE: THIS FORM WILL NOT BE USED TO DROP A STUDENT FROM ANY COURSE

DENT NAME	I.D. NUMBER	COURSE NAME	TIME & DAY	TICKET NUMBER	CURRENT DATE 09-18-73	COMMENT
BS MARILYN G	73-02793	MUSIC120AD	12 M W F	2864	__	
EN JOHN S	73-04578	MUSIC 145	8 TU TH	2898	__	
ES RUBEN	72-22594	MUSIC 145	8 TU TH	2898	__	
MAS DEBBIE A	71-20142	MUSIC 145	8 TU TH	2898	__	
CE CHARLOTTE M	72-18369	MUSIC 145	10 TU TH	2900	__	
TER KAREN C	72-25101	MUSIC 145	11MW	2902	__	

PLEASE RETURN THIS ROSTER TO THE OFFICE OF
THE DEAN OF INSTRUCTION. ORANGE COAST COLLEGE.
NO LATER THAN 9-24-73 .

APPENDIX B

DEAR STUDENT: Our records show that you have stopped attending the course _____. May we ask you to answer a few questions about it and to return this questionnaire using the enclosed, postage-paid envelope? Your answers will be kept confidential. They will not be used to withdraw you from any course. Thank you.

1. Have you stopped attending the course permanently?

   1 ☐ Yes *(Please answer rest of questionnaire. You are advised to officially withdraw in order to protect your college record.)*
   2 ☐ No: If no, why have you not been attending lately?

      3 ☐ Illness (personal or in family)
      4 ☐ Personal or family business
      5 ☐ Personal or family travel
      6 ☐ Other: What? _____

   If you answered "No" to question one, it is not necessary to complete the rest of the questionnaire. Please return it using the enclosed postage-paid envelope. If you answered "Yes" to question one, please complete the remainder of the questionnaire.

2. Was your reason for stopping attendance in the course partially or completely because of any of the following? *(Check as many as apply)*

   1 ☐ Did not have necessary prior courses or prerequisites
   2 ☐ Change in job work schedule made a change in college schedule necessary
   3 ☐ Discontent with instructor
   4 ☐ Discontent with the course
   5 ☐ Course was not what you expected
   6 ☐ Transportation problems
   7 ☐ Parking problems
   8 ☐ Times of class meetings were inconvenient
   9 ☐ Class met too often each week
   10 ☐ After missing several sessions it would have been too difficult to catch up
   11 ☐ Fear of an undesirable grade for the course
   12 ☐ Course was too easy
   13 ☐ Course was too hard. Why? _____
   14 ☐ Other reason: What? _____

3. Did you have a conference with the instructor about the course before you stopped attending it?

   1 ☐ Yes
   2 ☐ No

4. If another course which you wanted were to have started up when you stopped attending, would you have enrolled in it?

   1 ☐ No
   2 ☐ Yes: If yes, what course would you prefer? _____

5. As a college student, have you been receiving veteran's benefits?

   1 ☐ Yes
   2 ☐ No

5 ☐ Personal or family travel
6 ☐ Other: What? _____

If you answered "No" to question one, it is not necessary to complete the rest of the questionnaire. Please return it using the enclosed postage-paid envelope. If you answered "Yes" to question one, please complete the remainder of the questionnaire.

2. Was your reason for stopping attendance in the course partially or completely because of any of the following? *(Check as many as apply)*

1 ☐ Did not have necessary prior courses or prerequisites
2 ☐ Change in job work schedule made a change in college schedule necessary
3 ☐ Discontent with instructor
4 ☐ Discontent with the course
5 ☐ Course was not what you expected
6 ☐ Transportation problems
7 ☐ Parking problems
8 ☐ Times of class meetings were inconvenient
9 ☐ Class met too often each week
10 ☐ After missing several sessions it would have been too difficult to catch up
11 ☐ Fear of an undesirable grade for the course
12 ☐ Course was too easy
13 ☐ Course was too hard. Why? _____
14 ☐ Other reason: What? _____

3. Did you have a conference with the instructor about the course before you stopped attending it?

1 ☐ Yes
2 ☐ No

4. If another course which you wanted were to have started up when you stopped attending, would you have enrolled in it?

1 ☐ No
2 ☐ Yes: If yes, what course would you prefer? _____

5. As a college student, have you been receiving veteran's benefits?

1 ☐ Yes
2 ☐ No

6. What is your marital status?

1 ☐ Married
2 ☐ Single
3 ☐ Divorced/Separated
4 ☐ Widowed

7. While attending college, have you been working?

1 ☐ No
2 ☐ 1 - 10 hours per week
3 ☐ 11 - 20 hours per week
4 ☐ 21 - 30 hours per week
5 ☐ 31 - 40 hours per week
6 ☐ More than 40 hours per week

Please complete other side

8. Did you take advantage of help available at the campus such as tutorial center, math lab or financial aids?

1 ☐ Yes
2 ☐ No

9. Have you tried to visit with a college counselor within the past year?

1 ☐ Yes, sucessfully
2 ☐ Yes, unsuccessfully
3 ☐ No, didn't try

10. Please estimate your annual family income.

1 ☐ Less than $3,000
2 ☐ $3,000 to $5,999
3 ☐ $6,000 to $9,999
4 ☐ $10,000 to $14,999
5 ☐ $15,000 or more

11. Which of the following is true for you?

1 ☐ Have stopped attending all college courses *(Please answer question 12 and skip question 13)*
2 ☐ Have stopped attending some but not all college courses *(Please skip question 12 and answer 13)*
3 ☐ Have dropped this course in order to enroll in another course *(Answer neither question 12 or 13)*
4 ☐ Have transferred to another section of the same course *(Answer neither question 12 or 13)*

12. If you have stopped attending <u>all</u> of your college courses, why?

1 ☐ Moved out of area
2 ☐ Transferred to a different college: Which college? _____
3 ☐ Went to work full-time in a job that is:
  4 ☐ Related to your college major
  5 ☐ Unrelated to your college major
6 ☐ Health reasons
7 ☐ Other: What? _____

13. If you have stopped attending some but not all of your college courses, it was because you:

1 ☐ Went to work
  2 ☐ Full-time
  3 ☐ Part-time
    Your job is:
    4 ☐ Related to your college major
    5 ☐ Unrelated to your college major
6 ☐ Found that you had enrolled in too many college units
7 ☐ Other: What? _____

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

JUN 14 1974

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION

Thank you for your help.